

## **The Miracle of Sight: Carole Ingram**

I wake to the blurred vision of coloured objects.

This is unfamiliar, and my senses soar as the objects become clearer. I see a blue sky through the hospital window and green trees growing on the hospital grounds. Also, multi-coloured flowers that decorate the garden.

Glancing down at my hands, I can see that my Mother has painted my nails a lovely shade of pink. 'Simone,' she would say 'you have such pretty nails, and your hair is so soft with a natural curl.'

I feel a tear run down my cheek, stinging my eyes, still delicate from the operation. The doctor must have removed the bandages while I was sleeping. I am feeling overwhelmed, so I get out of bed and walk to the window. I see birds with white wings flying free. So, I go to another window overlooking the ocean. It's so blue, like the sky. I have flashbacks of images of nature from when I was five years old, and I could still see them. Soon after, I developed shingles, which spread to my eyes and took my sight.

My mother tried to keep my memory of sight alive by describing the colours of nature to me. She would tell me about rainbows, which are made up of all of the colours of nature. Now, as I look at all its beauty, I can identify with it again.

I gaze at the sea. Memories of how it felt years ago, so soft on my skin, fill my senses. Now I'll be able to swim again. I feel free like the birds.

My hospital bed is relatively small, with a single bed and a tiny closet for clothes. The large picture window I am looking through is a blessing. I feel a soft nudge against my leg and look down to see a tail wagging. 'Shane, hello, boy. You've been asleep under my bed, haven't you?'

Bending to hug my beautiful golden retriever, who has been my best friend for the last ten years, I look into his eyes.

'You are so beautiful,' I tell him. 'I knew you would be all golden like the sun.'

Shane looks directly into my eyes, trying to understand as he senses something has changed. 'You will always be my best friend, boy. I can throw the ball for you to fetch now when we walk in the park.'

Shane puts his paws up on the window sill to see people passing outside as well. His tail is wagging fast with excitement.

Next, my curiosity leads me towards the bathroom's full-length mirror. I was only eight when I saw the last image of myself, with long, dark, wavy hair pulled back in a ponytail. I was tall for my age with a slim figure. I remember my eyes were green, and I had 'pearly' white teeth, which people admired. So I used to smile at myself in the mirror a lot to see them.

Now, after many years of losing sight, I feel a little nervous as I approach the mirror, wondering what I will look like. My first glance gives me a start. Here I am, looking all grown up at fifteen. My figure has all the curves of a slim young woman. My complexion is still as I remember, and also my green eyes. I smile at myself to see if my teeth are still white. They are so, all in all, I am happy enough at the image that looks back at me.

I return to the window, which Shane is still looking through. I see a plane overhead and a flock of rainbow-coloured birds. A magnificent red, green, and blue parrot is perched on the branch of a tree close by. 'My goodness, Shane, it's all the colours of the rainbow.'

I hear my mother's voice conversing with a nurse in the hospital corridor outside my door. I still have an image of how my mother used to look in my mind's eye. What will she look like now? I pray she will look the same. Then, there she is, just an older version of herself. An attractive woman with shoulder-length blonde hair. She's still slim, just like me. She's dressed in a bright yellow outfit for this special occasion. She gives me one of her warm smiles I remember so well, and I run to hug her.

'I can see! I can see! I can see!' I feel so free. The sight of my mother's tears is living proof of a miracle.